



## WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS PROGRAM

# *Great Egg Harbor*

## *National Scenic and Recreational River*

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Designated: October 27, 1992

### Overview:

Approximately 99 percent of the eligible waterways and adjacent lands of the designated Great Egg Harbor River corridor are within the boundary of the Pinelands National Reserve. Approximately 25% of the corridor is in public

Location: The 129-mile designated river corridor meanders through 12 municipalities and four counties in southern New Jersey on its way to the Great Egg Harbor Bay.



The Great Egg Harbor River's fragile ecology supports a variety of threatened and endangered resources

### Outstanding Resources:

The freshwater and tidal wetlands serve as resting, feeding, and breeding areas for waterfowl throughout the year amid undisturbed forests and swamp areas. The river corridor is home to several threatened and endangered species of flora and fauna. The Great Egg Harbor River has been recognized as the longest canoeable river in the Pinelands National Reserve and its rich history and scenic vistas are irreplaceable.

ownership offering prime recreational opportunities and open space protection. Since the majority of the land is in private ownership, balancing preservation, recreational use, and individual rights and interests makes management of the river corridor a complex responsibility.

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Thirty miles of relatively undisturbed waterways offer prime spawning opportunities for anadromous fish which provide food for the growing bald eagle and osprey populations. The threatened and endangered Swamp Pink, Knieskern's beaked-rush, and Bog Turtle also thrive in the fragile ecology of the Great Egg Harbor River corridor. The region is rich in history. Evidence of the Lenape Indians before occupation by Europeans in the early 1700s can be found. Remnants of structures which converted bog iron into cannon balls during the Revolutionary War, blast furnaces, sawmills, glass factories and brick and tile works are also visible in the corridor.

#### Management Goals:

Five critical goals were incorporated into the planning efforts of private citizens, governmental organizations, and the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association as the future of the Great Egg Harbor River was discussed. The partnership, created among all interests, works toward attaining the following goals:

#### Goals:

*Increase public awareness by educating the public about the valuable natural, cultural, scenic and recreational resources of the watershed*

*Streamline existing regulations and coordinate their enforcement to balance protection of the river and the rights of property owners.*

*Maintain existing land uses and develop land uses compatible with protection and enhancement of the river*

*Enhance the free-flowing character and conditions for appropriate recreational uses of the river*

*Enhance the natural, cultural, and scenic resources of the river corridor and recognize their relationship to a larger ecosystem for today's and future generations.*

#### Management Approach:

The draft Comprehensive Management Plan proposed a long-term management strategy. This has the support of the local municipalities and calls for the creation of the Great Egg Harbor River Council. The Council would consist of members from each municipality, and the National Park Service. It would become the forum for resolving issues affecting the river corridor.

The Council would work cooperatively with the NPS to establish priorities and protect resources. The final Plan is expected to be completed in the year 2000.



The Great Egg Harbor River is the longest canoeable river in the Pinelands National Reserve